

1. (Four times Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a nucleic acid molecule that comprises SEQ ID NO:1,

(b) a nucleic acid molecule that comprises SEQ ID NO:13

(c) nucleic acid molecules that differ from the nucleic acid molecules of (a) in codon sequence due to the degeneracy of the genetic code, and

(d) complements of (a), (b), or (c).

7. (Twice Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule that encodes a polypeptide that has at least 75% amino acid identity to the full length amino acid sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO.: 2.

26. (Thrice Amended) A kit comprising a package, wherein the package contains:

(i) a nucleic acid agent selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes under stringent conditions to a molecule consisting of the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO:1 and which codes for a polypeptide that stimulates the growth of lens epithelial cells, wherein the stringent conditions comprise hybridization at 65°C in hybridization buffer wherein the hybridization buffer comprises 3.5 x SSC, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% polyvinyl pyrrolidone, 0.02% Bovine Serum Albumin, 2.5mM NaH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>(pH7), 0.5% SDS, and 2mM EDTA,

(b) nucleic acid molecules that differ from the nucleic acid molecules of (a) in codon sequence due to the degeneracy of the genetic code, and

(c) complements of (a) or (b),

and

(ii) a control comprising an amount of an isolated nucleic acid of claim 1 for comparing to a measured value of hybridization of said nucleic acid agent to said isolated nucleic acid in (i).

# REMARKS